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Security Council

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Letter dated 31 January 2003 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

Pursuant to Security Council resolution 1244 (1999), I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the report on the international security presence in Kosovo covering the period from 1 to 31 December 2002 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would arrange to bring this report to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Kofi A. **Annan**

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Annex

[Original: English]

Monthly report to the United Nations on KFOR operations

1. Over the reporting period (1 to 31 December 2002) there were almost 28,000 Kosovo Force (KFOR) troops in theatre.

2. Despite some violent incidents and an increase in political tension, the overall situation in Kosovo during the month of December remained substantially stable.

Security

3. In two separate incidents of fatal injuries due to explosions, KFOR provided assistance for explosive ordnance disposal and medical aid. On 5 December, two ethnic Albanians were killed close to the border with Albania in Djakovica as a result of an explosion in a marked minefield. On 6 December, two children died and three were wounded by the explosion of a hand grenade they were playing with.

4. During the evening of 13 December, a car-bomb exploded in Pristina injuring 32 people and causing structural damage to buildings. This incident took place one day before the visit of the delegation of the Security Council.

5. KFOR continued to carry out Kosovo-wide search operations in its campaign against weapons-smuggling and activities of ethnic Albanian armed groups. Weapons and ammunition were seized daily. Items confiscated during the month included 67 assorted weapons, 108 grenades and mines, and 2,350 rounds of ammunition.

6. On 10 December, KFOR lifted the curfew over the "Confidence Zone" covering the east bridge, the west bridge and the footbridge in Mitrovica.

Border/boundary security

7. KFOR continued to monitor border and boundary security during the reporting period, and prevented illegal crossings. The number of incidents involving attempts to cross borders decreased sharply compared to the previous month, due in part to the worsening weather conditions. KFOR intercepted a total of 29 attempts to cross borders illegally and detained 28 people who were subsequently handed over to United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) police.

Cooperation and compliance by the parties

8. Federal Republic of Yugoslavia security forces continued to remain in compliance with the terms and conditions of the Military Technical Agreement.

9. Six cases of non-compliance within the Kosovo Protection Corps were reported during the month of December. Forty-eight cases remain open.

10. KFOR railway engineers provided assistance to the railways of Kosovo to enable the opening of train service on 12 December, creating a daily link from the ethnic Serb enclaves in northern Kosovo to Serbia.

Cooperation with international organizations

11. On 31 December, after seven people escaped from the UNMIK prison in Dubrava, KFOR intercepted the escaped prisoners and handed them over to UNMIK Police.

12. On 23 December, KFOR and UNMIK signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) covering the loaning of weapons to the Kosovo Police Service (KPS). This MoU establishes the conditions under which KFOR may loan a specified number of confiscated weapons to the KPS border security units for use at designated points of crossing and under UNMIK Police supervision.

Outlook

13. The overall security situation in Kosovo remains stable, despite continued localized acts of vandalism and intimidation. The increased presence of UNMIK Police and KPS has allowed KFOR to reduce its engagement in static security duties.